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Educational Writings

REVIEWS AND BOOK NOTES

Rural education.—The problem of bringing to rural communities educational advantages comparable to those of the town or city has for some years past engaged the attention of those interested in national welfare. The fact that almost one-half of our population may be said to be of rural composition lends significance to the problem. Not only so, but the fact that it is next to impossible to obtain country-school teachers with training of a sort fitting them to cope with their peculiar educational and social needs renders the situation the more difficult.

Mr. Davis has brought together in his readable volume¹ summaries of his experience as a country-school teacher and of his observations of those who have made conspicuous successes in this field. He maintains that the outstanding need of rural communities is efficient leadership. He says:

The successful teacher in the centralized rural high school of the twentieth century must possess the combined abilities of "community manager," "social engineer," and educator. He must be the social and industrial light as well as the intellectual light of the people he serves [p. iii].

Proceeding on this basis, he sets forth common causes of failure as well as the more positive suggestions as to what has been done by way of securing conspicuous successes. These successes are due to the power of discerning community needs, and likewise of supplying the leadership essential to bringing the people to two things: first, to want better educational advantages and, second, to be willing to co-operate in getting and maintaining them.

The book abounds with happy illustrations, and each chapter ends with a series of thought questions and a short bibliography.

Some of the topics treated are "Getting the School before the People," "The Social Factor in Rural Life," "The Community Idea in Public Education," "School Taxes in Country Districts," "The Public School and the Health of the Community," "The Rural-School Museum," and "Larger School Units in the Country."

The book is well adapted for use as a text in rural-school reading circles, or as a reader in those classes preparing teachers for rural service.

The psychology of childhood.—Very much of the early literature of child study in America was characterized by a loose, popular style and scientific

¹ E. E. DAVIS, *Twentieth-Century Rural School*. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1920. Pp. viii + 242.